

New Haven, CT — Representatives Rosa DeLauro (CT-3), John Larson (CT-1), Joe Courtney (CT-2), Jim Himes (CT-4), and Chris Murphy (CT-5) praised the U.S. Department of Agriculture's disaster declaration for the state of Connecticut today.

This agriculture disaster declaration will enable Connecticut farmers whose crops or farms were damaged by Tropical Storm Irene to qualify for federal assistance. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide assistance including low-interest loans, financial assistance to help producers of non-insurable crops, and emergency funding to help cover production and physical losses.

In September, the delegation held a teleconference call with farmers from the across Connecticut impacted by the storm and representatives from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to discuss their concerns, the ongoing recovery efforts, and the need for an agriculture disaster declaration.

"Farmers and crops across our state were devastated by the impacts of Tropical Storm Irene. From flooding and wind damage to the loss of profits and equipment, the damage was extensive. Our farmers need help, and this disaster declaration will give them access to a wide range of federal assistance," **said Congresswoman DeLauro**. "I look forward to continuing to work with our local communities and farmers to ensure that they get the help they need to rebuild, recover, and move forward."

"As Connecticut and the rest of the East Coast continues to recover from the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, we must ensure that the farmers who have been devastated by these storms are not forgotten," **Congressman Larson said**. "Though the FEMA disaster declaration and subsequent aid from the Small Business Administration has gone a long way to help residents who were negatively impacted, many of our small farms have lost a significant amount of crops and livestock. Today's USDA Disaster Declaration will go a long way in helping individuals recoup some of the damage they suffered from these storms."

“This is very good news for farmers whose crops and small businesses were severely impacted by Tropical Storm Irene,” **said Congressman Courtney**. “Having seen the damage for myself firsthand after the storm, it was already clear to me that our farmers needed help. Today’s declaration will kickstart the recovery process. I will continue to work to ensure that all of the Connecticut farmers, Towns and businesses that were devastated by Tropical Storm Irene get the assistance they need.”

“Hurricane Irene devastated families, businesses, and farms throughout Connecticut, and I urge all those who experienced uninsured losses to apply for assistance,” **Congressman Himes said**. “My office stands ready to help any constituents who need assistance applying for disaster relief.”

“This is welcome news for the thousands of farmers across Connecticut whose crops were devastated by the storm and the terrible flooding in its aftermath,” **said Congressman Murphy**. “Our farms are in trouble, and this declaration will help rush relief to them. Our delegation pushed hard for this, and I’ll continue to fight for any and all available aid to help get Connecticut farmers back on their feet.”

For more information on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Service Agency and disaster assistance, please visit www.fsa.usda.gov .